



45 Ash St.  
East Hartford, CT 06108  
Tel: (860) 289-5401  
Fax: (860) 289-5405  
  
1-800-LUNG USA  
lungne.org

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## **Testimony of the American Lung Association in Connecticut in Support of Raised House Bill No. 5449, An Act Concerning the Retail Sale of Cigarettes and Tobacco Products**

March 12, 2010

Public Health Committee  
Room 3000, Legislative Office Building  
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Senator Harris, Representative Ritter and Members of the Public Health Committee:

The American Lung Association in Connecticut submits written testimony in strong support of Raised House Bill No. 5449, An Act Concerning the Retail Sale of Cigarettes and Tobacco Products.

Over the past decade, the State of Connecticut has dispersed over 7 million dollars of the Tobacco and Health Trust Fund to help implement comprehensive strategies to prevent initiation of new smokers, reduce exposure to second hand smoke and increase cessation. It is during that same period of time, 2000-2009 cigarette smoking among high school students decreased significantly from 25.6% to 15.3% and the same is true for middle school students, where the rate went from 9.8% down to 3.3%. This bill is designed to prohibit self service of tobacco products and is another effective strategy targeted to limit youth access to these deadly toxins with anticipation of youth smoking rates to continue on a downward trend and save lives.

We value your deep commitment to advancing strong policies that protect youth and urge you to support Raised Bill No. 5449 promoting a smoke free Connecticut. Thank you for this opportunity.

Dawn Mays-Hardy, MS  
CT Director Health Promotion and Public Policy  
American Lung Association in Connecticut

